

has helped over 14 million veterans to buy their own homes. Veterans who came from the poorer socioeconomic areas were given educational opportunities at the best colleges. Vocational and on-the-job training for technicians were provided. Loan guarantees to help Veterans purchase homes, farms and small businesses were provided; as were the 52-20 payments to Veterans who were looking for decent permanent jobs. Veterans Administration hospitals were built, and offered war heroes like Senator Bob Dole, and Senator Dan Inouye, top rehabilitation medicine, near their home towns.

The American Legion had to use every bit of its political clout to insure that members of the House and Senate, who told the veterans that they supported the GI Bill of Rights, kept their word and voted for it. Senator George Bennett "Champ" Clark, a World War I Veteran, who served with Captain Harry Truman, and who was the original founder of the American Legion in 1919, managed the GI Bill through the US Senate; where it carried unanimously.

In the House, and in the US Senate, on February 16, 1944, for reasons only they could understand, the VFW, Disabled American Veterans and Military Order of Purple Heart, requested of the Senate Finance Committee members, that they kill the GI Bill of Rights. Committee Chairman "Champ" Clark, to his great credit, brought the GI Bill to a Committee vote. It passed unanimously. The House version of the GI Bill of Rights passed by 387 to 0. But minor differences in the House and Senate versions had to be worked out by a joint conference committee. Representative John Rankin of Mississippi tried, at the last minute, to block the GI Bill of Rights. The American Legion found the deciding vote, Representative John D. Gibson, a member of the Joint Conference Committee recuperating from an illness, down in Douglas, Georgia. On the morning of June 10, 1944, Representative John D. Gibson was flown, thanks to the efforts of the American Legion, to Washington DC where he stormed into the Joint Conference Committee room and cast the vote that broke the tie.

Millions of taxpayers who became doctors, lawyers, businessmen, clergymen, teachers, professors, entrepreneurs and responsible members of the Middle Class can thank the American Legion for their efforts, for lobbying for American Veterans. The GI Bill of Rights paid for itself by generating hundreds of billions of tax dollars paid by GI's over the next 50 years. Now, the American Legion recognizes, through its over 3,000,000 grass roots members that the original GI Bill of Rights, just as strong as the 1944 version in strength and stature, is needed. Post No. 9 will be in the front ranks in fighting for a stronger GI Bill of Rights.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 27, 1995

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably called away on personal business on Thursday, January 26, 1995. I was, therefore, not available to vote for rollcall Nos. 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, and 51.

Had I been present I would have voted nay on No. 41, aye on No. 43, aye on No. 44, aye on No. 45, aye on No. 46, aye on No. 47, aye on No. 48, nay on No. 49, aye on No. 50, and nay on No. 51.

PROPOSING A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 25, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. Res. 1) proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of House Joint Resolution 1, the balanced budget constitutional amendment.

It is always with reluctance that I support legislation to amend the Constitution of the United States, the greatest document of democracy the world has ever known. Its greatness is measured by the fact that it has been amended so few times before in our Nation's history.

However, Congress after Congress has proven that it lacks the fiscal discipline necessary to balance the Federal budget and begin to reduce the growing national debt, which approaches \$5 trillion. Gimmick after budgetary gimmick has failed to get our Nation's fiscal house in order. Without a willingness to cast the tough vote after tough vote required to bring Federal revenues and expenditures in line, a constitutional amendment is the only means left to instill in future Congresses the discipline necessary to bring about a balanced Federal budget.

Three times this decade we have fought this battle to amend the Constitution, and three times we were defeated by those refusing to face up to our current bleak fiscal plight. In 1990, we failed by just 11 votes to pass a balanced budget amendment at the same time our national debt reached \$3 trillion. Two years later, we failed by just 10 votes to pass this constitutional amendment, as the national debt passed \$4 trillion. Last year we tried again, but fell 19 votes short as the national debt climbed to \$4.7 trillion.

Our Nation cannot afford for this House to fail again today. With the passage of this amendment, we can look forward to the day when we begin to retire the national debt, not add to it.

One of the demands of the American people last November 8 was that Congress force the Federal Government to live within its means. This is the first of 10 legislative promises we made to the American people in our Contract With America.

Already we have delivered on our commitment to reduce the cost of running our own House, eliminate the number of congressional committees and staff, and make our proceedings more open and representative of those we are elected to serve. Earlier this month, we also enacted the Congressional Accountability Act, legislation that is now the law of the land which forces Congress to live under the same laws as every other American.

With the passage of the balanced budget amendment tonight, we will tell the American people that we are serious about reversing the tide of red ink that threatens to cripple our

economy under the weight of an annual mortgage payment on our national debt that will exceed \$339 billion this fiscal year. This is just the interest alone we pay on the national debt we have accumulated since the birth of our Nation.

The enactment of a balanced budget amendment would leave Congress with no choice but to begin the difficult task of cutting Federal spending which is the secret to eliminating deficit spending. It was my hope that the amendment requiring a three-fifths supermajority for passage of any future increases in taxes would have passed to insert greater fiscal discipline on Congress by reducing the incentive to raise more revenue rather than cut spending. It should be obvious to all that the Federal Government does not tax too little, it spends too much. Annual deficits of \$300 billion should also make it obvious that Congress always spends whatever revenue it raises and a whole lot more.

Unfortunately, the amendment we consider tonight that affords us the greatest chance at passage requires a supermajority vote to spend more than we take in any one year and to raise the debt ceiling, but only requires a simple majority vote to raise taxes. Still, the balanced budget amendment is a strong enough tool, as we have seen in each of the States that requires their annual budgets to be balanced, to restore order to our budgetary proceedings.

It is my hope that our colleagues in the other body will act as expeditiously as we have in the first month of this 104th Congress to send to the President and ultimately the States this constitutional amendment that is supported by a large majority of the American citizens.

In the meantime, it is time for this House to turn its attention to making the hard choices and cast the tough vote after vote that will get us on track to deliver to the American people a balanced Federal budget. My colleagues and I on the Appropriations Committee have already begun the task of scouring the 1995 Federal budget for savings we can return to the Federal Treasury and programs that we can eliminate to reap future savings.

Mr. Chairman, it will take a two-thirds vote tonight to pass this constitutional amendment. It is my hope that we are successful in passing this important plank in our Contract With America.

We need to remember that the tough votes to cut Federal spending begin in just a few weeks and will continue for month after month, and year after year until we succeed in our goal to achieve a balanced Federal ledger. All that is required, however, is a simply majority of this House to have the courage to make these votes that will turn our fiscal tide.

Tonight will be more than a symbolic victory. It will be the launching of a long and difficult but very necessary campaign to begin chipping away at our national debt and at the same time restoring the faith of the American people in their elected representatives. We must be up to the task this night and every day and night until our job is complete and future generations are relieved of the burden placed on them by past generations of unchecked Government spending.